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EXECUTIVE SEARCH

the right **people**

OPPORTUNITY PROFILE

Labour Relations Specialist



**Athabasca
University**

VANCOUVER

EDMONTON

CALGARY

TORONTO

THE ORGANIZATION ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

Athabasca University, Canada's Open University, is dedicated to the removal of barriers that restrict access to and success in university-level study and to increasing equality of educational opportunity for adult learners worldwide.

Athabasca University has five faculties (Business, Health Disciplines, Humanities & Social Sciences, Science & Technology and Graduate Studies) committed to excellence in teaching, research, and scholarship and to being of service to the general public. As one of four comprehensive academic and research universities in Alberta, Athabasca University specializes in online distance education.

With an enrollment of more than 40,000 students, Athabasca University helps thousands of undergraduate and post-graduate learners every year to accomplish their personal goals and realize their dreams.

Athabasca University's approach to post-secondary education is based on four key principles: excellence, openness, flexibility and innovation.

- **Excellence:** Athabasca University is dedicated to achieving the highest standards in undergraduate and graduate teaching, research, scholarship and student service.
- **Openness:** Athabasca University is committed to its mission of guaranteeing access to post-secondary learning to all who have the ability and desire. If you are 16 or older, you are eligible for admission.
- **Flexibility:** Athabasca University's flexible learning model adapts to student's needs, putting students in the driver's seat. Students can enrol in most programs and register for most courses at any time of the year and work at your own pace, studying at home, at work or wherever you may find yourself.
- **Innovation:** Athabasca University continues to adopt and develop new, learner-centred learning models and technology-based alternatives to traditional, classroom-based instructional channels and contexts. Athabasca University applies technology to make learning accessible and to help students achieve their learning goals.

Athabasca University governs itself through a bicameral governance structure, as set out in the Alberta Post-Secondary Learning Act and the Athabasca University Regulation. The Board of Governors is the senior governing body, but shares academic governance with the General Faculties Council, the academic governing body.

To learn more, visit: www.athabascau.ca

To learn more about the charming Town of Athabasca that is situated along the beautiful Athabasca River, visit the following local and regional links: <http://www.athabasca.ca/> and <http://www.athabascacounty.com/>

THE OPPORTUNITY LABOUR RELATIONS SPECIALIST

Reporting to the Manager, Labour Relations and Employment Services, the Labour Relations Specialist is a senior professional who plays a key role in guiding Athabasca University's labour relations functions and in advising and coaching on labour relations matters. This position serves as the primary point of contact for all AU employees, unions, associations and senior management personnel with respect to labour relations issues.

Through negotiation and resolution of important labour issues and collective agreements, the Labour Relations Specialist directly affects the university's labour relations environment. The work of the Labour Relations Specialist can also significantly affect the university's finances and employee morale through successful and timely resolution of grievances, arbitrations, and legal issues.

Key Roles & Responsibilities

Labour Dispute Resolution

- ◆ In consultation with the Manager, Labour Relations and Employment Services, resolve issues with unions and the Athabasca University Faculty Association in a proactive manner. This function includes active case management of labour relations related files with senior management.
- ◆ In conjunction with the Manager, Labour Relations and Employment Services, co-ordinate all aspects of appeal, grievance, arbitration, harassment and human rights claims processes and provide input into recommendations on dispute resolutions.
- ◆ In consultation with legal counsel and the Manager, Labour Relations and Employment Services, recommend arbitration strategies and prepare required arguments and materials.
- ◆ Co-ordinate the investigation and discipline process, including preparing required materials, conducting research and booking meetings.
- ◆ Attend arbitration, mediation and Labour Relations Board hearings when necessary.
- ◆ Educate supervisors and managers on labour relations issues, legislation, collective agreements and performance management.
- ◆ Collaborate with Learning Services Tutorial and human resources advisors on labour relations requirements and functions as necessary.

Negotiation Facilitation

- ◆ Facilitate effective labour relations negotiations (including terms of collective agreements and compensation strategies) by researching current trends and precedence, by reviewing literature and recent decisions, and through discussions with peers in other organizations and consultations with legal counsel.
- ◆ Prepare positions and materials for negotiation, analyze collective agreement language, schedule meetings and negotiating sessions, document discussion and agreements, co-ordinate mandate and negotiation team requests, draft proposals, and finalize revisions to collective agreements.
- ◆ Co-ordinate management positions in advance of negotiations with a union or the Athabasca University Faculty Association.
- ◆ Participate on negotiating teams. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, recording minutes, serving as a committee member and chairing negotiating meetings when required.

Planning and Development

- ◆ Advise and consult on labour relations matters at all levels of the University.
- ◆ Arrange quarterly labour management meetings for all AU bargaining units, participate in the meetings, and co-ordinate the completion of action items and applicable research.
- ◆ In consultation with Manager, Labour Relations and Employment Services, review, update and develop labour relations related policies and procedures.
- ◆ Provide guidance to senior management on longer term labour relations strategies that promote the strategic goals of the University.
- ◆ Disseminate collective agreement reports as per the requirements of collective agreements.
- ◆ Develop ad hoc labour reports as required.
- ◆ As directed by the Manager, Labour Relations and Employment Services, participate in special projects.

THE PERSON

Qualifications & Experience

The incumbent should ideally possess the following:

- ◆ A post-secondary degree in Human Resources, Business or related field.
- ◆ A minimum five years of human resources experience, including at least three years in a specialized labour relations role.
- ◆ Experience in union bargaining ,negotiation and grievance management, with demonstrated success in developing effective working relations with managers and union representatives
- ◆ An equivalent combination of education and experience in labour relations and human resources may be considered.
- ◆ A solid understanding of AU collective agreements, processes, policies and procedures is preferred.
- ◆ Experience working in a post-secondary environment and the CPHR certification is preferred.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Communication - Shows exceptional written, verbal, and presentation skills and is an active listener. Able to interpret and explain complex information in a clear manner to employees at all levels of the University. Builds trust through demonstrated objectivity and consistency in all responsibilities. Gains the commitment of other stakeholders. Strong attention to detail.

Negotiator - Has an open and engaging personal style but an active and astute negotiating posture. Is proven at completing complex agreements whereby both parties leave the table feeling positive. Well versed in a mutual gains approach to bargaining.

Problem-Solving Skills - Has great capacity for thinking analytically and evaluating complex business and human resources issues. Focuses on the solutions rather than the problems and has a well-developed sense of reasoning.

Collaborator – Able to collaborate with many university stakeholders and make sound judgments based on information collected. Works proactively in developing partnerships and networking among those in a position to assist in the realization of short and long-term goals.

Leadership Skills - Able to lead, coach, and support. A mentor and positive role model with the ability to initiate, motivate, integrate, and delegate.

Visionary - Understands and interprets labour relations trends and addresses issues and organizational challenges with clarity, energy, and confidence. A progressive idea person who encourages the adoption of “Best Practices”.

Political Astuteness and Acumen - Demonstrates sensitivity to understanding of complex situations and organizations. Shows a mature and common sense approach dealing with labour relations negotiations.

Professional - Acts as both a leader and as a supportive member of different teams. Possesses high ethical standards and an honest, open, and consistent approach to working with peers, employees and staff.

Team Player - Understands and appreciates the effectiveness of working synergistically with others. Is open and accessible.

Adaptability - Has an ability to adapt to new and changing situations. Enjoys and embraces new challenges. Demonstrates flexibility to changing priorities and is able to remain up-to-date on evolving labour practices and employment laws.

Complexity - Shows a thorough understanding of the complex collective agreements entered into by AU and other post-secondary institutions. Has a comprehensive knowledge of best practices in resolving labour relations issues.

COMPENSATION

A competitive compensation package will be provided including an attractive base salary and excellent benefits. Further details will be discussed in a personal interview.

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Anurag Shourie and Sonny Kapoor

Davies Park

Suite 501, 10226 104 Street

Edmonton, AB T5J 1B8

Phone: 780-420-9900

Email: Edmonton@daviespark.com